

# 31 The Range of Disease




**Y**ou walk down the street and see a billboard that warns you about the risks of young people smoking. You read a magazine ad that tells you to drink more milk. You turn on the TV and watch a 10-second spot encouraging you to read more. These ads, which aren't selling a specific brand or service, are known as public service announcements (PSAs). PSAs provide useful and important information to the public. Many PSAs encourage children and younger adults to make choices to ensure long-term health. People who put out PSAs are responsible for making sure that the information is accurate and helpful. This means that claims should be supported by research or scientific studies. In this activity, you will make a PSA about a disease.

**Disease** is simply a breakdown in the structure or function of a living organism. In humans, there are many different ways that our structures (such as tissues and organs) and our functions (such as digestion) can be affected. As a result, many different diseases can affect people. Before you make your PSA, you will need to learn about a disease and decide what information is important to share with others.

## CHALLENGE

What type of information should be presented in a PSA on a disease?

MATERIALS	
	<i>For the class</i>
	books, magazines, CD-ROMs, Internet access, etc.
	<i>For each student</i>
	1 Student Sheet 31.1, "The Hunt Is On"
	1 Student Sheet 31.2, "Knowing About Disease" (optional)
	1 Student Sheet 31.3, "Disease Research Report"
	1 Student Sheet 31.4, "PSA Panels" (optional)

## PROCEDURE

### Part One: Knowledge of Disease

1. Use Student Sheet 31.1, "The Hunt Is On," to find people in your class who know someone who has had a particular disease. Have them initial the box with the name of the disease. Each person (including you) can initial only one box on your Student Sheet.
2. On Student Sheet 31.2, "Knowing About Disease," mark an "X" in the "Student" column if you know someone who has had that disease.
3. Use Student Sheet 31.2 to find out whether a parent/guardian and/or a grandparent/older adult have known someone with a particular disease.
4. As a class, total the number of students, parents/guardians, and/or grandparents/older adults who have known someone with a particular disease.



## Part Two: Disease Research



5. Choose a disease to research. You may want to choose from the list of diseases on Student Sheet 31.2.
6. Over the next few days or weeks, find information on this disease from books, magazines, CD-ROMs, the Internet, and/or interviews. You can also go to the SEPUP website to link to sites with more information on diseases mentioned in this activity.
7. Use the information you find to complete Student Sheet 31.3, “Disease Research Report.” You should be able to describe
  - a. what causes this disease
  - b. symptoms of this disease
  - c. how this disease is spread among humans
  - d. how this disease can be prevented
  - e. how this disease is medically treated
  - f. two important and/or interesting facts about this disease.
8. Use your Disease Research Report to create a public service announcement (PSA) in the form of a cartoon strip. Develop a 3–6 panel cartoon strip that tells people either how to prevent getting the disease or at least one important piece of information about the disease. An example is shown below. Remember, you can use humor, but be sure your PSA is appropriate for the classroom!

## ANALYSIS

### Part One: Knowledge of Disease



1. For which diseases was it easy to find someone to initial your boxes on Student Sheet 31.1?



2. Would you expect to find that the same diseases are equally common in different parts of the world? Why or why not?



3. Compare the number of students, parents, and grandparents who knew someone with a particular disease. What patterns do you observe? For example, which diseases were more familiar to the grandparent generation than your generation? What do you think is the reason for this?

### Part Two: Disease Research

*Look at the PSAs produced by other students.*

4. What can you do to prevent catching an infectious disease?



5. What types of diseases cannot be prevented? Explain.